FIGHTING MASS INCARCERATION AND DEPORTATION

Illinois Access to Justice is a state-wide program funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services that seeks to mitigate the devastating consequences of all forms of detention and incarceration and the resulting crippling effects on historically marginalized communities. Through a coalition of 59 community-centered organizations, we are expanding the network of holistic community-based legal services, including direct legal representation and education campaigns led by Community Navigators.
OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19

With the outbreak of COVID-19 beginning in March 2020, ILA2J partners were quick to respond to the immediate needs of our community members. Our partners:

- Trained 916 emergency community navigators in response to COVID-19 to share critical information and resources in the hardest hit community areas
- Conducted mobile immigration screenings
- Fought to win the release of many who were incarcerated and in immigration detention
- Shared information on how and where to get tested for COVID-19
- Passed out meals while incorporating Know Your Rights information
- Assisted hundreds in applying for emergency financial assistance

“Our Navigators have been absolutely crucial to our COVID response. Thanks to funding, the Navigators Manager was able to develop curriculum quickly and train Navigators so that information about everyone’s rights to healthcare and treatment/testing for COVID, travel rights and restrictions, and DACA updates got into the community.”

- THE IMMIGRATION PROJECT

“COVID-19 has been particularly devastating for people who have past or current involvement in the criminal justice system, their families, and their communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has only compounded the challenges our youth and families face, while a resurgent gun violence epidemic ravages our communities. As this is a particularly precarious time for families dealing with job loss and unstable housing situations.”

- WESTSIDE JUSTICE CENTER
STANDING TOGETHER FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

Over the past few months, we have witnessed ten of thousands of people throughout the country come together to call for racial justice and police accountability. Prior to the protests that followed the killing of George Floyd, we have witnessed how the COVID19 pandemic disproportionately affects communities of color.

ILA2J organizations stand with our communities during this time of hope and adversity. ILA2J providers have supported protesters through legal services and information, conducted mutual aid campaigns, and provided resources to community members.

On June 5th, Black and Brown mothers from Illinois Access to Justice partner organizations organized a march and vigil in solidarity with the Movement for Black Lives. Mothers from North and South Lawndale stood together, demanding justice.
ILLINOIS ACCESS TO JUSTICE
BY THE NUMBERS

75
SERVED INDIVIDUALS FROM
75 ILLINOIS COUNTIES

109
SERVED IMMIGRANTS FROM 109 COUNTRIES

161,474
INDIVIDUALS INFORMED OF THEIR RIGHTS
AND ACCESS TO LEGAL INFORMATION

600
COMMUNITY MEMBERS
RECRUITED AND TRAINED AS
COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS

8,292
FREE LEGAL SCREENINGS
CONDUCTED

OUR ILA2J LEGAL PARTNERS PROVIDED 8,292 INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED BY INCARCERATION AND DEPORTATION WITH FREE LEGAL SCREENINGS BETWEEN JANUARY AND JUNE 2020

TOP COOK COUNTY CITIES SERVED
- CHICAGO
- CICERO
- BERWYN
- MELROSE PARK
- ELMWOOD PARK
- EVANSTON
- SKOKIE

TOP CHICAGO COMMUNITY AREAS SERVED
- AUSTIN
- SOUTH LAWNDALE
- BELMONT Cragin
- HUMBOLDT PARK
- LOWER WEST SIDE

Areas Served

Please note the geographic regions are estimated based on zip code and population distribution from the 2010 Census Data.
COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY INCARCERATION
BY THE NUMBERS

- **269** Community Navigators Recruited
- **40,254** Individuals Provided with Legal Outreach and Education
- **634** Individuals Received Education about Rights in Relation to Job Seeking
- **84** Employers Educated About Rights of Returning Citizens in Hiring Process
COMMUNITIES IMPACTED BY IMMIGRATION BY THE NUMBERS

121,220
INDIVIDUALS REACHED THROUGH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL IMMIGRATION EDUCATIONAL TRAININGS

2,570
FREE IMMIGRATION LEGAL SCREENINGS CONDUCTED

811
IMMIGRATION CASES ACCEPTED FOR FULL REPRESENTATION

Of the 811 cases accepted, we served:
• 248 individuals in deportation proceedings
• 43 individuals currently in immigration detention
• And 87 asylum seekers

Our 331 Immigration Community Navigators that were recruited and trained in FY20 provided 4,273 individuals with accompaniment services to help them navigate the legal system and accessing other services critical to family stability.
NIJC’s Detention Project continues to provide legal screenings and representation to detained individuals who remain in ICE custody as the coronavirus pandemic continues. Pro bono attorneys working through NIJC’s Detention Project were able to secure the release of an NIJC client who spent almost a month in immigration detention after he was taken into ICE custody subsequent to a traffic stop in DuPage County.

- Heartland Alliance’s National Immigrant Justice Center

While participating in an Expungement & Sealing Summit held in early 2020, a client began sharing her struggles with the Land of Lincoln attorney assigned to her case. It turned out that the client is currently raising two of her grandchildren, ages 4 and 5 years old. While she is their guardian, she wants to adopt them because their father/ her son is in prison, and the biological mother is absent. These children did not choose to have their lives upended by their father’s incarceration. Being adopted by their grandmother provides the stability and security that all young children deserve. Land of Lincoln is currently assisting her in the adoption process.

- Land of Lincoln Legal Aid
OUR PARTNERS

Acclivus, Inc.
AFIRE
Ascend Justice
Beyond Legal Aid
BUILD, Inc.
Cabrini Green Legal Aid
Catholic Charities Legal Aid
Centro de Información
Centro de Trabajadores Unidos
Centro Romero
Chicago Community & Workers' Rights
Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance
Chicago Legal Clinic
Chicago Volunteer Legal Services
Chicago Workers' Collaborative
Children's Legal Center
Cornerstone Community Development Corporation
Erie Neighborhood House
The Evans Exoneration Project
Farmworker & Landscaper Advocacy Project
First Defense Legal Aid
FirstFollowers
Free Write Arts & Literacy
HANA Center
Illinois Legal Aid Online
Illinois Prison Project
Immigration Project
Indo-American Center
Instituto del Progreso Latino
James B. Moran Center for Youth Advocacy
Land of Lincoln Legal Aid
Lawndale Christian Legal Center
Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing
Legal Aid Chicago
Legal Aid Society of Metropolitan Family Services
Legal Council for Health Justice
Metropolitan Tenants Organization
The Monroe Foundation
Muslim Women Resource Center
Heartland Alliance's National Immigrant Justice Center
North Suburban Legal Aid Clinic
Northern Illinois Justice for our Neighbors
Northwest Side Housing Center
Northwestern University Bluhm Legal Clinic, Children and Family Justice Center
Partners for Our Communities
Prairie State Legal Services
Renz Addiction Counseling
The Resurrection Project
Safer Foundation
Southwest Organizing Project
Spanish Community Center
Teambwork Englewood
United African Organization
Uptown People’s Law Center
Warehouse Workers for Justice
Western Illinois Dreamers
Westside Justice Center
YMCA of the University of Illinois
YWCA Northwestern Illinois

For more information contact Tanya D. Woods, Esq. at tanya@westsidejustice.org or Ere Rendón at erendon@resurrectionproject.org